

March 8, 1976

Provost Hanna H. Gray
Hall of Graduate Studies
Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut 06520

Dear Hanna:

Unfortunately, I forgot to discuss the following matter with you this weekend.

As you know from recent descriptions, I, as well as a number of Yale faculty members, have been involved in the development of specific guidelines for carrying out certain new types of experiments in genetics. The guidelines are a response to the wide concern in the scientific community that some of these experiments are, potentially, capable of resulting in the construction of hazardous new microorganisms. Among other recommendations, the guidelines specify methods for physical containment of the potentially hazardous organisms.

For the experiments of greatest potential hazard that are still permissible under the guidelines, very stringent conditions are required and in all likelihood the few such facilities in the U.S. will be made available on a service basis to qualified investigators. Another large and very interesting group of experiments are deemed less potentially hazardous and require more modest facilities. It is presumed that such facilities will be made available locally, at least at the large research universities. The specified facilities require some alteration of normal air flow arrangements in a given room, and one or two pieces of equipment. It is generally considered that approximately \$30,000 to \$40,000 will be required to bring a laboratory room to the specifications.

Because of the nature of the work, it is widely recognized that such work spaces could be shared by several investigators, and indeed any other arrangement would be wasteful of resources. Happily, several people at Kline are already discussing a joint facility and are prepared to pool resources for this purpose.

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It may be that some support from University funds may be helpful to them, although it is also possible they will manage without that. In any case, it is an opportunity to encourage, by institutional interest, a rare interdepartmental cooperation in Kline. Professor Dieter Soll is actively involved in this effort and would be a good person to contact if you are interested.

It would probably also be a good idea to have a similar joint facility established at the Medical School. Professor Sherman Weissman and Professor Ed. Adelberg are interested parties, although I am not aware of specific cooperative efforts at present.

No doubt Professor Bockelman and Dean Berliner would be more particularly concerned with this matter than you. I hesitated to write directly to either of them since I am not at all certain of the propriety of a corporation member raising these questions. Should you consider it suitable, you might simply pass this letter on to those two gentlemen.

Yale scientists have assumed important roles in the raising and discussion of this problem, and many Yale scientists will be interested in taking part in the exciting scientific work anticipated from the techniques under discussion. Without the proper facilities they will be unable to do so in a responsible manner. Further, because of the predictably high rate of progress once the guidelines are officially adopted early this spring, some urgency is involved if Yale is to establish and maintain leadership in this exciting area of biology.

As always, it was a pleasure to work with you this weekend. Very best regards.

Sincerely,

Maxine Singer